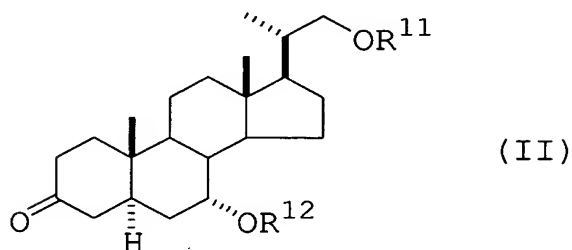


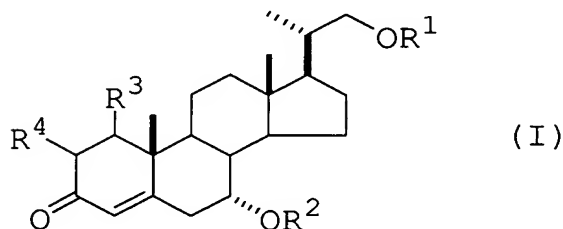
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Original) A method for producing a 5α -pregnane derivative represented by the formula (II):



wherein R^{11} and R^{12} are each independently a hydrogen atom or a hydroxyl-protecting group, which comprises reacting a pregnane derivative represented by the formula (I):



wherein R^1 is a hydroxyl-protecting group, R^2 is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxyl-protecting group, and R^3 and R^4 are each a hydrogen atom or in combination form a bond, with a metal selected from alkali metals and alkaline earth metals in the presence of a proton donor and an amine and/or ammonia.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein R^2 and R^{12} are hydrogen atoms.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 or 2, wherein R^3 and R^4 in combination form a bond.

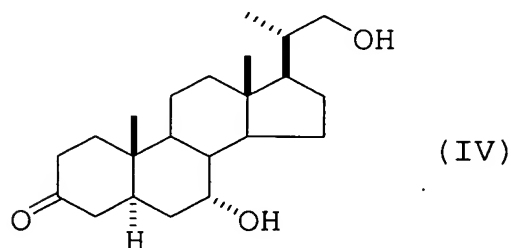
4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein R^1 and R^{11} are tri-substituted silyl groups having three, same or different, substituents selected from the group consisting of an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s), an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), an alkoxyl group optionally having substituent(s) and an aryloxy group optionally having substituent(s).

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein R^1 and R^{11} are tert-butyltrimethylsilyl groups.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein the metal is an alkali metal.

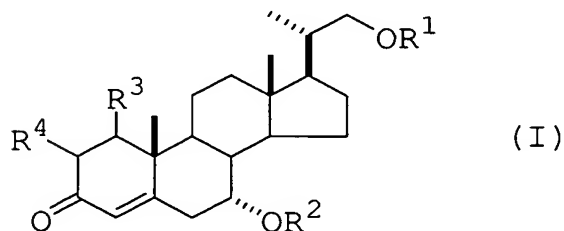
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the alkali metal is lithium.

8. (Original) A method for producing (20S)-7 α ,21-dihydroxy-20-methyl-5 α -pregn-3-one represented by the formula (IV):

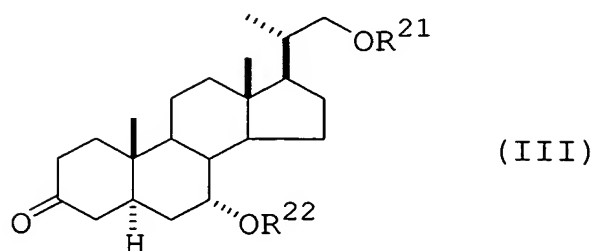


which comprises the steps of

(a) reacting a pregnane derivative represented by the formula (I):



wherein R^1 is a hydroxyl-protecting group, R^2 is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxyl-protecting group, and R^3 and R^4 are each a hydrogen atom or in combination form a bond, with a metal selected from alkali metals and alkaline earth metals in the presence of a proton donor and an amine and/or ammonia to give a 5 α -pregnane derivative represented by the formula (III):



wherein R^{21} is a hydroxyl-protecting group and R^{22} is a hydrogen atom or a hydroxyl-protecting group; and

(b) eliminating the hydroxyl-protecting group of the 5α -pregnane derivative represented by the formula (III) obtained by the aforementioned step.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein R^2 and R^{22} are hydrogen atoms.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 ~~or 9~~, wherein R^3 and R^4 in combination form a bond.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein R^1 and R^{21} are tri-substituted silyl groups having three, same or different, substituents selected from the group consisting of an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s), an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), an alkoxyl group optionally having substituent(s) and an aryloxy group optionally having substituent(s).

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein R^1 and R^{21} are tert-butyldimethylsilyl groups.

13. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein R^3 and R^4 in combination form a bond.

14. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein R^1 and R^{11} are tri-substituted silyl groups having three, same or different, substituents selected from the group consisting of an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s), an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), an alkoxyl group optionally having substituent(s) and an aryloxy group optionally having substituent(s).

15. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein R^1 and R^{11} are tert-butyl dimethylsilyl groups.

16. (New) The method of claim 9, wherein R^3 and R^4 in combination form a bond.

17. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein R^1 and R^{21} are tri-substituted silyl groups having three, same or different, substituents selected from the group consisting of an alkyl group optionally having substituent(s), an aryl group optionally having substituent(s), an alkoxyl group optionally having substituent(s) and an aryloxy group optionally having substituent(s).

18. (New) The method of claim 17, wherein R^1 and R^{21} are tert-butyl dimethylsilyl groups.